

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended. No new matter is added. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki (U.S. Patent No. 6,853,418), in view of Ishikawa (U.S. Patent No. 5,600,455); rejects claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki, in view of Ishikawa, and further in view of Oda (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0063234); rejects claims 5 and 8 over Suzuki, in view of Ishikawa, and further in view of Yokota (U.S. Patent No. 5,764,315); rejects claims 6 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Suzuki, in view of Ishikawa, and further in view of Kashima (U.S. Patent No. 5,521,797); and rejects claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Suzuki, in view of Ishikawa, and further in view of Yoshida (U.S. Patent No. 6,897,914). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Specifically, Applicants assert that neither Suzuki nor Ishikawa disclose or suggest, individually or in combination "*a spread illuminating apparatus for illuminating two objects, the apparatus comprising: at least one light source; a light conductive plate having the at least one light source at an end surface thereof and defining first and second major surfaces from which light emitted from the at least one light source and introduced in the light conductive plate exits out respectively toward the two objects, wherein the two objects partially overlap each other with the light conductive plate located therebetween; an optical sheet unit consisting of a diffuser sheet and a condenser sheet, and disposed on at least the second major surface so as to cover an entire area thereof; and a reflecting means having a smaller surface area than the second major surface, and disposed directly on top of the optical sheet unit*" (emphasis added), as recited in independent claim 1.

Suzuki, in Figure 4, discloses a liquid crystal display device with a first transmitting type region (item 29) and a second transmitting type region (item 30) wherein the two regions do not overlap each other. Accordingly, Suzuki does not disclose *a spread illuminating apparatus for illuminating two objects, wherein the two objects partially overlap each other with the light conductive plate located therebetween*, as recited in claim 1.

Furthermore, in Figure 4 of Suzuki, a polarizer (item 9) is disposed on an array substrate (item 5) and is not disposed on a surface of a light-conducting plate (item 19). Accordingly, Suzuki does not disclose *a spread illuminating apparatus for illuminating two objects, having a light conductive plate having defining first and second major surfaces wherein an optical sheet unit consisting of a diffuser sheet and a condenser sheet is disposed on at least the second major surface so as to cover an entire area thereof*.

Ishikawa, in Figure 6, discloses a transparent member having a multiplicity of prism-like portions formed on one of the surfaces. Therefore, Ishikawa also fails to disclose all of the features recited in claim 1.

Furthermore, Oda, Yokota, Kashima, and Yoshida do not make up for the deficiencies of Suzuki and Ishikawa. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that neither Suzuki nor Ishikawa disclose or suggest, individually or in combination, all of the features of independent claim 1.

In accordance with the above remarks, Applicants submit that independent claim 1 defines patentable subject matter. Claims 2-9 depend from claim 1, and therefore, also define patentable subject matter. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of claims 1-9.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-9 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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